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THE 1986 ARI SURVEY OF U.S. ARMY RECRUITS:
SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

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for

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20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)

This research note discusses the 1986 administration of the ARI New Recruit Survey, conducted during June July, and August of that year, by carefully selected and trained administrators at eight reception battalions. The total number of cases collected was 14,347, which included 7,971 Regular Army recruits, and 6,376 Reserve/National Guard recruits. The overall response rate was 88.6%. Recommendations for future surveys are made. This is a supplementary report produced to document the administration of the (OVER)

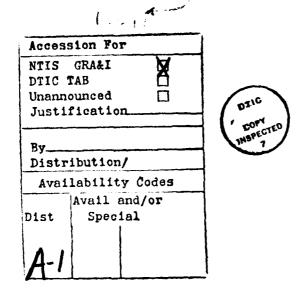DD FORM 1473 EDITION OF 1 NOV 65 IS OBSOLETE

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20. Abstract (continued)

1986 Army Research Institute of U.S. Army Recruits, also known as the New Recruit Survey (NRS). Separate volumes document the survey data files for respondents. Other reports in this series provide more extensive background documentation of the 1986 survey. Tabular descriptions which present the preliminary results of the 1986 survey separately for each Army component are also available. Keywords

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ARI Research Reports and Technical Reports are intended for sponsors of R&D tasks and for other research and military agencies. Any findings ready for implementation at the time of publication are presented in the last part of the Brief. Upon completion of a major phase of the task, formal recommendations for official action normally are conveyed to appropriate military agencies by briefing or Disposition Form.

The Army Research Institute (ARI) Enlistment Decision Surveys have become an important source of information to U.S. Army policy makers and planners. Originally developed by ARI in 1982 under a commission by the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, the surveys were intended to provide answers to questions concerning the enlistment motivations and demographic characteristics of incoming U.S. Army recruits. Complementing these original information sources are the surveys' ability to track changes in new recruit characteristics over time, as well as to provide an opportunity for the collection of new, policy-relevant information during each survey administration.

The ARI New Recruit Surveys of 1982 and 1983 were conducted at the request of the U.S. Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel. Sponsorship of the 1984, 1985, and 1986 surveys was assumed by the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, with the continuing interest of the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (Memorandum of Agreement Between the U.S. Army Recruiting Command and the U.S. Army Research Institute, signed 16 May 1985 and 22 April 1985, Subject: Sponsorship of ARI Enlistment Decision Surveys; and letter, U.S. Army Recruiting Command, USARCPAE-RS, 7 April 1986, Subject: Direct Fund Authorization For 1986 New Recruit Survey).

Initial results of the 1986 survey have been provided in the form of briefings to the Commander of the U.S. Army Recruiting Command (on 6 Aug and 4 Dec 1986), the Director of Military Personnel Management (ODCSPER) (on 5 Dec 1986), and the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (on 12 Dec 1986).

Specific policy and operational decisions have been made based on these results. For example, USAREC's dual-market recruiting and advertising operational plan was developed and continues to be monitored using analyses of NRS data. In addition, the survy effort has been transferred from a developmental effort at ARI to an operational tool of the Recruiting Command for monitoring recruiting policy and program implementation.

EDGAR M. JOHNSON
Technical Director

The surveying of 14,347 new Army recruits was accomplished only through the integrated efforts of many individuals.

First and foremost, appreciation must be extended to Drs. Michael Benedict and Timothy Elig, at the U.S. Army Research Institute (ARI). They drew up the sampling plan, helped us gain access to the reception battalions that served as survey sites, and established points of contact at each reception battalion. Dr. Benedict was instrumental in training the survey administrators, and in coordinating the overall effort.

Next, a lion's share of the credit for this project must go to our four survey administrators, Kathleen Barry, William Brown, Brett Cohen, and Debbie Goldsmith, all doctoral students in the Psychology Department at the University of South Florida in Tampa. They carried out the survey schedule exactly as planned and achieved excellent response rates in the field.

Thanks are also due to our points of contact at each of the eight reception battalions in the survey. They expedited our efforts, provided supplies, and insured that recruits were gathered together in a timely fashion. Their hospitality toward our administrators was likewise noteworthy. Persons involved at each station include (alphabetically by station): At Fort Benning, Captains Brown and Younger; At Fort Bliss, Mr. Fox; At Fort Dix, Sergeant Major Legg and Staff Sergeant Richards; At Fort Jackson, Captains Morehead and Robey, and Mr. Welchel; At Fort Knox, CW2 Carroll and Mr. Grice; At Fort Leonard Wood, Messrs. Gottfried and Howard; At Fort McClellan, SFC Vincent and Mrs. Weber; and At Fort Sill, Sergeants Burstler and Stephens, and Captain Wilson.

Lou Hagan of Data Recognition Corporation was most cooperative in getting supplies of booklets to the survey sites as needed. She also worked closely with us in establishing proper packing and delivery procedures.

Kitty Collins at Battelle was an effective coordinator as contract or procedural modifications became necessary.

Finally, my thanks go to Peggy McPherson who provided secretarial assistance throughout the project.

To all these able people, we extend our sincere gratitude.

EDWARD L. LEVINE

THE 1986 ARI SURVEY OF U.S. ARMY RECRUITS: SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Requirement:

To obtain information concerning the enlistment motivations, attitudes, knowledge, and demographic characteristics of U.S. Army recruits at the time of initial entry into the service.

Procedures:

The 1986 ARI New Recruit Survey (NRS-86) is the seventh in a series of survey research projects administered directly by ARI. The 1986 survey retains much of the same item content as presented to respondents in all previous versions while incorporating new questions on U.S. Army recruits' awareness of and interest in the Reserve Officer's Training Corps College programs; awareness, interest, and participation in U.S. Army enlistment incentives programs; new television programming; and intentions for using U.S. Army training to obtain training and skills for future civilian job opportunities.

The NRS data collection was conducted at the eight (8) U.S. Army Reception Battalions during June, July, and August of 1986. A modified Latin-Square design was employed to randomize the selection of survey weeks across all eight Reception Battalions during the field data collection periods. ARI coordinated with Reception Battalion Operations personnel in scheduling the administration dates and times.

Four separate forms of the ARI New Recruit Survey were administered to U.S. Army recruits. Forms "A", "B", and "C" were administered to Active U.S. Army (RA) recruits, and Form "D" was administered to U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard recruits. Active Army recruits had an equal chance of receiving any one of the three RA forms. The survey was self-administered following specific instructions that were provided by on-site contractor personnel. Recruits were instructed to mark the responses that fit them best, directly in the survey booklets.

Survey forms were registered as they were received at the contractor's site. Survey booklets were optically scanned and subjected to a post-edit programming process in which data accuracy was assured through manual verification of all write-in response items as well as investigations of light-mark reading errors for "Mark all that apply" questions. A technical manual, codebooks, tabulation volumes, and a report on the survey

administration, "lessons learned", and recommendations were produced.

Results:

A total of 14,362 U.S. Army recruits were administered the 1986 New Recruit Survey. Based on U.S. Army military personnel records, 13,117 had no prior military service and 1,172 had prior military experience (the status for the remaining 73 was not ascertained). The sampling plan utilized for this survey imposes restrictions on the generalizability of the survey results to the overall 1986 fiscal year U.S. Army accessions population. However, the survey research process was successful in collecting and providing current information related to new U.S. Army recruits.

Utilization:

The ARI New Recruit Surveys continue to provide information to U.S. Army policy makers and personnel planners about the quantity and quality of U.S. Army accessions. Specifically, information obtained from new recruits about their enlistment motivations, awareness and knowledge of enlistment incentives, and personal characteristics augments the available information on enlistment trends. Awareness of such trends is an integral part of the process of preparing to meet the U.S. Army's projected human resource requirements. Data and information from the 1986 New Recruit Survey has been and will continue to be used for these purposes, as well as providing assessment information about recruits' media habits and preferences in order to maximize the effects of U.S. Army advertising.

THE 1986 ARI SURVEY OF U.S. ARMY RECRUITS:
SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

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THE 1986 ARI SURVEY OF U.S. ARMY RECRUITS:
SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to summarize the administration phase of the 1986 ARI New Recruit Survey. This report does not touch on such other aspects of the project as its underlying rationale, choice of a survey design, questionnaire construction, data analysis and interprepretation, and the like. Those key elements and others dealing with the entire project are covered in the technical manual (Benedict, 1987), and accompanying volumes (Benedict, Elig, & Kopischke, 1987(a); Benedict, Elig, & Kopischke, 1987(b); Benedict, Elig, & LaBatte, 1987(a); Benedict, Elig, & LaBatte, 1987(b); Benedict, Elig, & LaBatte, 1987(c); Benedict, Elig, & LaBatte, 1987(d); Benedict, Elig, & LaBatte, 1987(e)).

This report is organized into sections as follows:

1) A Chronology of Activities - This section highlights the activities undertaken in collection of data. It is intended to serve both as a source of information for future administrations and as a record of what occurred in 1986.

2) Sampling Plan and Data Collected - This section summarizes the sampling plan followed, numbers of cases collected, response rates and reasons for non-response. Comparisons with previous surveys of new recruits are made as appropriate.

3) Lessons Learned and Recommendations for Future Surveys - This section underscores carefully selected aspects of the survey administration in terms of problems experienced and how we overcame them. This section should be of assistance to those responsible for future survey administrations.

4) Overall Summary - This section briefly summarizes the report.

A CHRONOLOGY OF ACTIVITIES

The survey administration was scheduled for June, July and August of 1986.

In May of 1986, project activities commenced with a review by the Project Director of the scope of work, his orientation by ARI, and the development of procedures to fulfill reporting and budgeting requirements. Next, survey administrators were selected, the sampling plan reviewed and survey instructions written. Simultaneously, contacts were made with points of contact at the eight reception battalions that were to serve as survey sites. Currently, the U.S. Army has eight reception battalions located at Fort Benning, GA, Fort Bliss, TX, Fort Dix, NJ, Fort Jackson, SC, Fort Knox, KY, Fort Leonard Wood, MO, Fort McClellan, AL, and Fort Sill, OK. During these conversations, the following items of information were collected.

- Directions to the survey location. (In all cases, we requested that someone meet the administrators and guide them in from their hotel during the first visit.)

- Lodging arrangements.

- Which day of the processing schedule would be the best to survey incoming recruits.

- Nature and size of facilities in which the survey would be administered including availability of a PA system if needed.

- Reconfirmation of the weeks for administration of the survey, and times of day for the administration. (Administration took place during the week only, never on Saturday or Sunday.)

- Availability of supplies such as number 2 pencils.

- Method of mailing the completed survey booklets back to the data analysis center, Data Recognition Corporation. (UPS was used in most cases, Parcel Post in others.)

- Numbers of recruits, separately by Regular Army and Reserve/ National Guard, to be expected during the survey weeks.

- Any obstacles or problems to be overcome.

As these items became known, they were passed on to survey administrators, the supplier of test booklets, and ARI.

The survey administrators were trained in late May. The training covered five major topical areas:

1)   Administrators' General Role and Responsibilities.

2)   Introduction to the Army.

3)   The 1986 ARI Survey of U.S. Army Recruits.

4)   Survey Administration Practices and Standards.

5)   Administration of the 1986 ARI New Recruit Survey.

The training program is summarized in Appendix A to this document. The report also contains information about the survey administrators. During training, instructions and procedures were refined, and administrators were assigned to reception battalions on the basis of such factors as their preferences and nature of the workload to be expected at each station. Rather than random assignment of administrators to weeks and reception battalions, it was decided that each of the four administrators would visit the same two reception battalions over the course of the entire data gathering effort.

Survey administration began during the week of 2 June 1986 with visits to Forts Bliss and Dix, and continued at a rate of two reception battalions a week through the week of 25 August 1986. There were two exceptions. No data were collected during the week of 30 June because of the July 4th holiday. The visit to Fort Jackson scheduled for the week of 18 August was switched to 4 August to accommodate another study taking place at Fort Jackson during the originally scheduled time. During the first visit to each station, ARI personnel met with the administrator and key personnel at each reception battalion to finalize arrangements.

Our objectives at each survey site were as follows:

- Survey all non-prior service recruits who were processed during the week of our visit.

- Have Regular Army recruits complete Forms A, B or C of the survey booklets with equal numbers responding to each form. Have Reserve/National Guard recruits complete Form D.

- Ship completed booklets to the scanning contractor at the end of each week's administration.

- Keep daily survey administration records.

- Log lessons learned and problems encountered.

Throughout the data collection efforts, careful logs were kept, and remitted to ARI. Survey booklets were packaged and shipped at the end of each week to the scanning contractor's site. As problems needing special attention arose, they were handled by ARI and/or the Project Director. Perhaps the most serious problem had to do with the availability of booklets. Due to fluctuations in the expected processing flow at the reception battalions, we found that some locations had excess numbers of the four forms of the booklets while others had shortages. Through the efforts of ARI, the problem was largely resolved.

At the end of the data collection effort, survey administrators were asked for their reactions and evaluation of the effort. Their views are integrated into Sections Three and Four of this report.

All of the scheduled visits in the sampling plan (as modified) were completed by the survey administrators. The survey administration was completed on schedule.

SAMPLING PLAN AND DATA COLLECTED

In this section, the sampling plan is outlined. Numbers of cases collected, response rates and reasons for non-response are reported, and selected comparisons are drawn with previous surveys of new recruits.

The Sampling Plan

The sampling approach was based on randomly selecting two of the eight reception battalions to be visited during each of the twelve weeks of data collection using a "latin square" grid (Westat, 1986). For a variety of reasons, practical and research based, the sampling plan established was not random due to activities going on at each fort and other similar concerns. The sampling plan appears in Table 1. Of the total of 24 visits that took place in 1986, compared to 1985, nine visits (38%) to the same fort were made by us in 1986 and by Westat in 1985 during corresponding weeks. Our sampling plan had one visit planned to each of six forts in each month of data collection. In the remaining two forts (Dix and Leonard Wood) two of the three visits we made were in the same month. Nonetheless, examination of the table suggests that in both years survey administration was spread throughout the three-month period at each reception station. In no case was a given fort visited on consecutive weeks. We cannot determine with data on hand whether differences in the sampling plans have affected either comparability of survey data between the 1985 and 1986 administrations or representativeness of data as compared with total Army accessions in the full year.

Total Sample and Response Rates

The total number of cases collected was 14,347 including 7,971 Regular Army recruits (55.6%) and 6,376 Reserve/National Guard recruits (44.4%).

With respect to response rates, the total number of recruits we could have surveyed during all our visits was 16,191 of which 8,756 were Regular Army and 7,435 were Reserve/National Guard. Thus, our response rates were 88.6% total, 91% for Regular Army and 85.8% for Reserve/National Guard.

Table 2 contains numbers and response rates by reception battalions.

An important issue regarding numbers of surveys administered is the accuracy of the estimated number of recruits compared to the actual number processed during the weeks that survey administrations were scheduled. These estimates, provided by our points of contact at each of the eight reception battalions, were used to govern the distribution of booklets to battalions. Since separate forms were used for Regular Army (Forms A, B, C) and Reserve/National Guard (Form D), relevant data were analyzed separately for these two categories and for each reception battalion across all three visits. The data appear in Table 3. The primary error tendency is to overestimate the number of recruits

Table 1

Sampling Plan for the ARI New Recruit Survey of 1986 Compared to that Used in 1985

	Week of Administration											
Reception Battalion	1 02 Jun[a]	2 09 Jun	3 16 Jun	4 23 Jun	5 07 Jul	6 14 Jul	7 21 Jul	8 28 Jul	9 04 Aug	10 11 Aug	11 18 Aug	12 25 Aug
Ft. Benning		U		(W)		U	(W)			U(W)		
Ft. Bliss	U	(W)			(W)		U				(W)	U
Ft. Dix	U		U(W)				(W)		U(W)			
Ft. Jackson	(W)	U			(W)		U			(W)	U[b]	
Ft. Knox	(W)			U				U(W)	(W)		U	
Ft. Leonard Wood		(W)			U			U(W)				U(W)
Ft. McClellan				U(W)		U(W)				U	(W)	
Ft. Sill			U(W)		U	(W)			U			(W)

NOTE: These are the original sampling plans. "W" indicates a planned visit by Westat in 1985. "U" indicates a planned visit by staff from the University of South Florida in 1986. 1985 dates uniformly began one day later, e.g., 3 June, 10 June, etc.

[a]The visits indicated for Westat actually took place in September.

[b]This visit was subsequently rescheduled for the week of 4 August, 1986.

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Table 2

Number of Completed Booklets and Response Rates
for the New Recruit Survey 1986

Reception Battalion	No. Cases	% of Sample	Response Rate
Ft. Benning	2,097	14.6	.939
Ft. Bliss	500	3.5	.855
Ft. Dix	2,359	16.4	.805
Ft. Jackson	3,113	21.7	.900
Ft. Knox	1,425	9.9	.834
Ft. Leonard Wood	2,559	17.8	.917
Ft. McClellan	1,059	7.4	.929
Ft. Sill	1,235	8.6	.918
Totals	14,347	100.0[a]	.886

NOTE: Number of cases includes Regular Army, Reserve and National Guard.

[a]Adds to 99.9% due to rounding error.

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Table 3

Comparison of Expected Numbers of Recruits vs. Actual Numbers
Surveyed Across Three Scheduled Visits

Reception Battalion	Regular Army			Reserve/National Guard		
	Expected	Actual	Discrepancy	Expected	Actual	Discrepancy
Ft. Benning	1,581	1,281	296	1,437	812	625
Ft. Bliss	365	293	72	110	207	-97
Ft. Dix	1,174	1,201	-27	1,891	1,158	733
Ft. Jackson	2,024	1,688	336	1,589	1,425	164
Ft. Knox	924	872	52	532	553	-21
Ft. Leonard Wood	1,599	1,393	206	1,335	1,166	169
Ft. McClellan	656	576	80	422	483	-61
Ft. Sill	800	663	137	1,100	572	528
Total Discrepancies			1,152			2,040

NOTE: Discrepancy represents expected minus actual number surveyed.

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expected both for Regular Army and Reserve/National Guard. Using the expected figures would have led to too many booklets being printed and shipped. On the other hand, too few booklets on hand could affect the sample's representativeness. It would appear that the estimation process should be studied with an eye toward making it more accurate in future surveys. If this is not possible, the slight additional cost of providing and shipping excess books should be borne in preference to missing cases when the estimation is too low.

In Appendix B, more detailed tables show response rates separately for Regular Army and Reserve/National Guard recruits by fort, a week by week breakdown of numbers expected and surveyed at each fort, along with numbers declining and not responding, and numbers of recruits surveyed as a function of day of processing.

The response rate comparisons between Regular Army and Reserve/ National Guard recruits show that at two of the three reception battalions with the highest volumes, we missed relatively more Reserve/ National Guard recruits than Regular Army. This suggests that efforts might be worthwhile to insure higher response rates for this category of recruits in future surveys.

Week-by-week data reveal expected changes in the composition and size of the sample on the basis of Regular Army as compared to Reserve/ National Guard recruits. For example, at Fort Dix, the first week's visit yielded 757 cases of which 70% were Reserve/National Guard recruits. The third week's visit yielded 1,002 cases of which only 31% were Reserve/National Guard recruits. Generally, there is a pattern of reduction in Reserve/National Guard recruits from the first through third visits, consistent with the processing of these recruits so that basic entry training can be completed during the summer months.

Figures on which day of processing recruits were surveyed suggests that numbers are sufficient to analyze whether day of processing affects selected survey results. In our administration, days 2 and 3 were the primary days when surveys were administered.

Reasons for Non-Response

In only three instances during the data collection effort did a recruit decline to answer the survey. Of the other 1,841 recruits who were not surveyed, 355 (19.2%) were missed due to not having a sufficient supply of the right form of the survey booklet on hand. Sixty (3.3%) had prior service. The remainder, 1,426 (77.5%) were missed because platoons were on detail, individuals were ill or receiving medical/dental care, recruits were shipped out early, and a variety of other reasons which kept recruits from the survey administration site. More detailed information is contained on the weekly log sheets kept by survey administrators and sent to ARI periodically during the course of the data collection.

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE SURVEYS

As a result of our data collection efforts, we have learned a number of lessons that should be useful to those responsible for future surveys of this type. These are organized into the following categories and discussed in the order listed:

1)   Planning for Data Collection

2)   Instructions and Administration

3)   Setting and Supplies

4)   Items in Survey Booklets Needing Revision

Planning for Data Collection

There are two aspects of planning that we have identified as needing improvement. One has to do with enhancing survey response rates, the other with estimating the number of recruits to be surveyed at each reception battalion. These are not independent of each other, because more accurate estimation will insure, for example, that proper facilities will be provided and sufficient numbers of booklets will be on hand, thereby reducing the chances of losing respondents.

The most important causes of loss of respondents are related to factors that prevented reception battalion personnel from getting recruits to the survey administration site. These include platoon leaders not being told or reminded that they had to get recruits to the site by a certain time, recruits being shipped early, or recruits being assigned to various other duties at the scheduled time of the survey. Perhaps these problems could be prevented by designating a specific time at each reception battalion for recruits to participate in this and other approved research efforts. Processing time for each recruit would be planned to include up to a certain number of hours for research participation. Under such conditions research efforts would become less of an imposition and more of an expected event.

Key personnel, including platoon leaders, should be briefed orally and in writing about the forthcoming project, its purpose and importance, to gain their cooperation. A planned sequence of reminders would also be initiated to deal with the problem of forgetting.

With respect to estimating numbers of recruits to be expected at survey sites, there should be enough data available to use multiple regression or other statistical techniques for the purpose of making the estimates more exact. We found estimates to be in error by a rather considerable margin, usually in the direction of overestimating the number of recruits. The statistical procedures available for estimations like this are straightforward and relatively inexpensive, assuming that records of previous years' experience are accurate and readily available. Where volume is expected to be high, provisions can be made to gain assistance from personnel on the base.

Instructions and Administration

In some instances, conditions were such that the survey administration, which was planned to take approximately an hour, had to be completed in substnatially less time. This required survey administrators to deal only with the most critical elements of survey instructions. The critical elements should be decided upon in advance, and the training program for administrators should cover this contingency.

We found also that it is worthwhile to interleave forms A, B and C for Regular Army recruits and to hand out the proper forms A-D as recruits file into the survey site.

During the administration, administrators should periodically move up and down the aisles to insure that recruits are actually reading and answering questions as opposed to making random responses. Recruits should be asked politely but firmly to respond to questions if this is discovered.

Procedures to follow when recruits have finished may vary from base to base. Whenever possible, it is worthwhile to do a spot check with the recruits present. This should be the responsibility of the administrator and any assistants available, and should cover examination of the page of the booklet containing social security number and in the case of Form D for Reserve/National Guard recruits the inside back cover. Time permitting, responses could be spot checked to see if they conform to instructions. If problems are detected, the booklet could be returned to the recruit for revision.

Additional suggestions include the following:

- On the first page of all forms, where the instructions "How To Fill Out This Survey" appear, it should be stated that recruits must enter their roster and line number in the box on that page.

- We found that the true/false question at the top of page two was unnecessary and could be eliminated.

- Many recruits do not know their MOS code. This causes delays in administration. The booklet might state that if the recruit does not know his or her MOS, they can leave it blank. If the recruit does know it, they can be instructed that it would help to fill it in. Then the administrator would have to fill in the missing codes during post-administration checking.

- Under the booklet heading "Marking Directions", an underscored statement should be entered that reads, "Do not make any marks outside of the circles, unless you are writing a number in a box." There should also be a statement about filling in a zero if more than a one digit response is possible but the recruit's answer is a single digit. For example, with five persons in the recruit's household, the response should be 05.

- Recruits should be instructed to leave a question blank if there is no appropriate response for them rather than writing in their own response.

- Survey administrators should make a record of instances where social security numbers do not match on rosters and ooklets, so that these can be followed up later.

Another point deserves mention. Those recruits for whom English is a second language, should be surveyed as part of a separate survey administration project. Taking special steps to include them in our survey, including the provision of an interpreter, was not worthwhile. Only a carefully translated survey booklet or an interview in the respondents first language will yield useful information that can be efficiently collected.

Setting and Supplies

Generally speaking we found that the setting was adequate and comfortable. At times, however, settings were too warm or too cramped. Perhaps the planning sessions referred to earlier could take this into account by providing a back-up room or an alternate site when the original one is too small or otherwise unsuitable.

Facilities for mailing completed booklets were adequate. However, there are two areas that need to be improved upon in this context. First, survey administrators should be given more careful instructions in the future about how to pack booklets in boxes for mailing. In some instances packing was done too loosely, and the booklets shifted around. This made it more difficult to reconcile the box's contents with the header sheet placed in each box.

Second, more careful procedures should be developed to track both blank and completed booklets. At each base a designated person should log booklets and boxes in and out, and provide a secure place for their storage.

Bases all provided the pencils for completing booklets. Sometimes this caused problems, because number two pencils were either in poor condition or in short supply. Probably the most appropriate thing to do is to have administrators bring their own supply of pencils.

Items in Survey Booklets Needing Revision

We found during survey administration that a number of items in the booklets caused confusion for many recruits. These items are listed below and suggestions for change are made.

Question Number	Form	Suggested Revision
3	A,B,C,D	Either leave out minutes or instruct recruits to estimate.
4	A,B,C,D	Provide alternatives for those of Hispanic background and explain what Hispanic means.
9	A,B,C,D	Add notation, "Reply in the shaded circles below."
10	A,B,C,D	Add notation, "Reply in the white circles below."
17- 31	A,B,C	Add notation, "For each item 17-31 you will need to pick A or B or C or D or E."
18- 32	D	Add notation, "For each item 18-32 you will need to pick A or B or C or D or E."
33- 51	A,B,C	Add notation, "Be sure to choose one response for each item."
34- 54	D	Add notation, "Be sure to choose one response for each item."
58 55	A,B,C D	Add notation, "Pick only one choice from A-K as your most important reason and a different single choice as your second most important reason." Place the statement about making sure you made only one choice at the beginning rather than the end of the question (except for Form B where it already appears there).
96- 97	D	Add response choice, "I don't know."
111-113	A,B,C	Add response choice, "I don't know."
137	D	Add response choice pertaining to college.
139	D	Add response choice, "I am still attending school."
156-159	D	Add notation, "There are 52 weeks in a year."
167	A,B,C	Add response choice, "I did not attend high school."

Question Number	Form	Suggested Revision
170	A,B,C	Add response choice, "I am still attending school."
187-190	A,B,C	Add notation, "There are 52 weeks in a year."
191	B	Change "employees" to "employers".
196-197	A,B,C	Add instruction, "Mark only one."
		Change last choice to, "I am not sure."
201-204	D	Add instruction, "Everyone will answer either questions 201 and 202 (Army Reserves), or 203 and 204 (National Guard).
205	D	Sometimes recruits do not see the note on page 23 to fill in the time and leave this blank. It should be reformatted.

OVERALL SUMMARY

In this project, we were called upon to survey new Army recruits at each of eight reception battalions. This report has summarized our activities during the preparation for data collection and the data collection conducted during June-August, 1986

This report covered the chronology of activities, the sampling plan, volume of data collected, lessons learned, and recommendations for future surveys. In the first section, preparatory activities such as training survey administrators were covered. Major objectives to be met during each survey visit were also outlined.

The second section dealt in part with the pattern and schedule of our visits to each reception battalion. It was found that our sampling plan called for visits to each battalion at intervals spread over the entire data gathering period.

A total of 14,347 recruits were surveyed, of which 7,971 were Regular Army and 6,376 were Reserve/National Guard. Response rates were 88.6% for the whole sample, 91% for Regular Army and 85.8% for Reserve/ National Guard recruits. We found, in general, a tendency for the expected number of recruits to exceed actual numbers, and recommended that the estimation process be studied to increase accuracy.

The primary reasons for non-response included recruits being on detail, receiving medical/dental care, being shipped early, and related reasons. Only three recruits declined to answer the survey.

The third section covered lessons learned and recommendations for future, similar survey administrations. Our suggestions were organized into the categories: planning for data collection, instructions and administration, setting and supplies, and items in survey booklets needing revision. Our most important recommendations include the following:

- A specific segment of time in the course of recruit processing might be designated for research to reduce the frequency of non-response.

- Administration instructions should be reviewed in advance to determine which aspects can be eliminated when administration must be speeded up.

- Administrators and assistants would do well to review booklets upon survey completion with recruits present to catch and correct errors.

- Separate surveys should be designed to capture the responses of those recruits for whom English is a second language.

- Numerous suggestions were made on individual survey items. Most of these called for slight modifications in instructions or an added response choice.

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APPENDIX A

ARI NEW RECRUIT SURVEY OF 1986:
TRAINING PROGRAM FOR SURVEY ADMINISTRATORS

INTRODUCTION

This Appendix summarizes the training that was provided to the four research assistants for the 1986 ARI Survey of New Army Recruits. It may serve both as a record of the training that took place and as a training manual to be used for future administrations of the New Recruit Survey.

The training program is described under the following major headings:

1) Goals of the training program

2) Time required

3) Description of trainers and trainees

4) Materials/written sources of information

5) Physical setting

6) Training process

7) Evaluation

THE TRAINING PROGRAM

Goals of the Training Program

The training of the four survey administrators had the following primary goals:

1) Provide the role requirements, such as reporting requirements and record keeping requirements, to each member of the survey administration team.

2) Insure a full understanding of the nature and scope of the ARI New Recruit Survey and the context within which the survey was being conducted, i.e., the U.S. Army.

3) Review and achieve a full understanding of the principles and standards associated with effective survey research.

4) Produce a set of survey instructions and logging or documentation forms ready for use in the field.

5) Achieve competency in the administration of the instructions, collection and mailing of booklets, and coordination with the field sites.

Time Required

The time required to achieve all goals was three working days, although training sessions and study of pertinent documents took place over the course of one calendar week.

Description of Trainers and Trainees

Trainers included Drs. Edward L. Levine and Michael E. Benedict, both of whom have substantial experience as teachers and trainers. Dr. Levine was responsible for the overall training program, while Dr. Benedict took responsibility for coverage of topics concerning the U.S. Army, the processing of recruits, the nature and scope of the ARI survey and the requirements to be met in administering the survey.

All trainees had had substantial previous exposure to psychological measurement processes and sampling procedures. All had completed the bachelor's degree and at least one year of intensive graduate work as matriculated doctoral students in the University of South Florida's Psychology Department. The nature of their background and their considerable intellectual ability led to the choice of the primary training approach, which consisted of lecture, group discussion, and study of pertinent documents. Trainees who are less knowleddeable and less able might require a longer period of training and a greater degree of concentration on "hands-on" activities in the training process.

Materials/Written Sources of Information

A host of written materials formed an integral part of the training. These fall into three categories and are listed below:

1) Background documents on the U.S. Army and the ARI New Recruit Survey.

> Anderson, J. W. (1985). Introduction to the Army. Alexandria, VA.: Army Research Institute. (Technical Document).

> Elig, T. W., Johnson, R. M., Gade, P. A., & Hertzbach, A. (1984). The army enlistment decision: An overview of the ARI recruit surveys, 1982 and 1983. (ARI Research Report 1371). Alexandria, VA.: Army Research Institute.

> Parham, S. E., & Elig, T. W. (1985). The development of a data base for decision aids for Army enlistment applicants and policy makers. Proceedings of the 1985 IEEE International Conference on Systems, Man and Cybernetics (4 pages).

2) General references on testing, surveys and attitude measurement.

Assael, H., & Keon, J. (1982). Non-sampling vs. sampling errors in survey research. Journal of Marketing, 46, 114-123.

Frankel, M. R., & Frankel, L. S. (1977). Some recent developments in sample survey design. Journal of Marketing Research, 14, 280-293.

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In addition, recent editions of the classic textbooks in psychological testing by Lee Cronbach and Anne Anastasi were consulted.

3) Materials specific to the ARI New Recruit Survey for 1986.

Draft versions of the survey administration schedule, survey instructions, reporting requirements, log sheets, header sheets, and actual survey booklets were utilized. The final version of the survey instructions is at Appendix C.

The materials also included, as might be expected, paper and pencils for all research assistants to use in note-taking.

Physical Setting

For the bulk of the training sessions a small seminar room with chalkboard was used. Trainers and trainees sat around a table in an informal atmosphere.

For the role-playing portion a large lecture hall seating over 400 was used to simulate survey administration sites.

Training Process

The training process consisted primarily of lecture and group discussion over the course of several sessions. During the intervening periods between sessions, trainees reviewed key documents, prepared questions for the sessions to come and thought through the specifics of survey administration instructions.

Chronologically, the topics covered in the lecture and group discussions were as follows:

1) Administrators' general role and responsibilities (Trainers: M. Benedict; E. Levine).

   * Role of the research assistants (administer surveys; insure accuracy of information to extent possible; represent ARI, Battelle and the University of South Florida; maximize the sample size).

   * Payment arrangements, travel arrangements and related details.

   * Expected demeanor and dress.

2) Introduction to the Army (Trainer: M. Benedict).

   * Nature of the organization.

   * The recruit processing process and reception battalions.

   * Key acronyms.

3) The ARI New Recruit Survey of 1986 (Trainer: M. Benedict).

   * Background and objectives.

   * Key findings in past surveys.

   * Sample size expected total and at each location.

   * How administrators affect survey results.

   * Points of contact at reception battalions.

   * Source of survey booklets; how received/returned.

   * General administration requirements (roster numbers; social security numbers; military occupational specialty numbers).

   * Review of booklet contents.

4)   Survey Administration Practices and Standards (Trainer: E.
     Levine).

     * Attitude measurement as related to psychological measure-
       ment generally.

     * Survey studies (sampling problems; confidentiality;
       potential biasing factors).

     * Standards and principles of questionnaire administration
       (materials needed; physical setting; comportment;
       standardization; controlling large groups; value of
       administrators' taking the survey; rehearsing the
       instructions; checking finished booklets; difficulty of
       language used in instructions).

5)   Administration of the ARI New Recruit Survey of 1986 (Trainers:
     M. Benedict; E. Levine).

     * Assignment of research assistants to sites.   (Done by
       preference of the research assistants.)

     * Development of survey administration instructions,
       including completion of header sheets.   (The final
       version of the survey instructions was developed as a
       joint product of trainers and trainees.   The final
       version is contained in Appendix C.)

     * Review of several reporting requirements for this
       portion of the overall survey project.   (Contained in
       Appendix C.)

     * Development of the final version of the log sheet.
       (Contained in Appendix C.)

     * Discussion of the problems that might arise in the field
       (non-participation; distributing booklets; getting proper
       forms to the proper persons; who to contact in case of
       emergencies).

     * Role play session (involved having each research
       assistant administer the instructions in a large
       lecture hall, other team members in the audience,
       seated at farthest points in the hall, checking tone,
       clarity and presentation style, asking questions and
       creating minor disturbances to try to simulate field
       conditions).

     * Wrap up, review of survey administration objectives
       and role of research assistants.

EVALUATION OF THE TRAINING PROGRAM

Given the nature of the project and the time frame, we were able to evaluate the program only in terms of trainee reactions. The trainees were unanimous in their view that they had been well prepared for survey administration in the field by the training program. All were enthusiastic about the project and their forthcoming contributions to it.

APPENDIX B

ADDITIONAL DATA ON RESPONSE RATE
AND RELATED ISSUES

Table 4

Response Rate by Fort and Recruit Category

Reception Battalion	Regular Army		Reserves/National Guard	
	No. Surveyed	Response Rate	No. Surveyed	Response Rate
Ft. Benning	1,285	98.7%	812	87.1%
Ft. Bliss	293	82.1%	207	90.8%
Ft. Dix	1,201	83.6%	1,158	77.5%
Ft. Jackson	1,688	94.2%	1,425	84.4%
Ft. Knox	872	82.7%	553	84.7%
Ft. Leonard Wood	1,393	91.8%	1,166	91.6%
Ft. McClellan	576	95.8%	483	89.6%
Ft. Sill	663	92.3%	572	91.2%

Table 5

Overall Figures on the New Recruit Survey Administration for 1986 by Reception Battalion and Week of Visit

Reception Battalion	No. Surveyed		No. Declining		No. Non-Response		No. Expected	
	RA	R/NG	RA	R/NG	RA	R/NG	RA	R/NG
Ft. Benning								
06/09-06/13	223	490	0	0	0	78	261	1,168
07/14-07/18	511	17	0	0	0	0	831	0
08/11-08/15	551	305	0	1	17	41	489	269
Total	1,285	812	0	1	17	119	1,581	1,437
Ft. Bliss								
06/02-06/06	57	147	0	0	0	1	100	50
07/21-07/25	119	8	0	0	14	8	140	10
08/25-08/29	117	52	0	0	50	12	125	50
Total	293	207	0	0	64	21	365	110
Ft. Dix								
06/02-06/06	228	529	0	0	54	88	257	743
06/16-06/20	286	314	0	0	140	231	338	762
08/04-08/08	687	315	0	0	41	18	579	386
Total	1,201	1,158	0	0	235	337	1,174	1,891
Ft. Jackson								
06/09-06/13	572	884	0	0	0	236	600	900
07/21-07/25	576	273	0	0	33	10	724	336
08/04-08/08	540	268	0	0	49	17	700	353
Total	1,688	1,425	0	0	82	263	2,024	1,589
Ft. Knox								
06/23-06/27	219	294	0	0	50	53	218	320
07/28-08/01	376	115	0	0	40	10	467	129
08/18-08/22	277	144	0	0	93	37	239	83
Total	872	553	0	0	183	100	924	532

Continued

Table 5 (continued)

Overall Figures on the New Recruit Survey Administration for 1986
by Reception Battalion and Week of Visit

Reception Battalion	No. Surveyed		No. Declining		No. Non-Response		No. Expected	
	RA	R/NG	RA	R/NG	RA	R/NG	RA	R/NG
Ft. Leonard Wood								
07/07-07/11	474	634	0	0	11	52	685	100
07/28-08/01	454	289	1	1	41	17	346	530
08/25-08/29	465	243	0	0	71	37	468	705
Total	1,393	1,166	1	1	123	106	1,599	1,335
Ft. McClellan								
06/23-06/27	92	236	0	0	11	0	119	223
07/14-07/18	196	108	0	0	10	8	212	86
08/11-08/15	288	89	0	0	4	48	325	113
Total	576	483	0	0	25	56	656	422
Ft. Sill								
06/16-06/20	108	301	0	0	13	4	250	500
07/07-07/11	322	233	0	0	24	8	250	500
08/04-08/08	233	38	0	0	18	43	300	100
Total	663	572	0	0	55	55	800	1,100
Totals	7,971	6,376	1	2	784	1,057	9,123	8,416
Grand Totals	14,347		3		1,841		17,539	

Table 6

Numbers Surveyed as a Function of
Day of Processing and Reception Battalion

| | Day of Processing | | | | | | | |
| | 0 | | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
Reception Battalion	RA	R/NG	RA	R/NG	RA	R/NG	RA	R/NG
Ft. Benning	223	5	---	---	1,062	807	---	---
Ft. Bliss	---	---	25	---	---	---	268	207
Ft. Dix	---	---	645	297	125	154	431	707
Ft. Jackson	---	---	572	884	199	109	917	432
Ft. Knox	---	---	---	---	---	---	872	553
Ft. Leonard Wood	95	120	59	41	1,239	1,005	---	---
Ft. McClellan	---	---	---	---	140	39	436	444
Ft. Sill	---	---	---	---	---	---	663	572
Totals	318	125	1,301	1,222	2,765	2,114	3,587	2,915

NOTE: RA is Regular Army. R/NG is Reserve/National Guard. In some cases, figures supplied represent estimates for days 0 or 1, based on available information.

APPENDIX C

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

ARI NEW RECRUITS SURVEY 1986

Instructions for Administering the Survey

I. Before Administration

A. Please read the survey booklets carefully before beginning
    the first administration in order to make sure that you
    understand everything that is being asked of the new
    soldiers who will actually be taking the survey. By
    reading the surveys, you can prepare yourself for any
    questions or difficulties that the survey respondents
    may have. You can discuss any problems with E. Levine,
    M. Benedict or T. Elig.

B. Complete Header Sheet for the upcoming administration.
    Leave blank the item on booklet count which will be
    entered at the conclusion of the session.

C. The survey will be most efficiently administered in a
    classroom-like setting. Respondents should be seated
    and have adequate table space to comfortably respond to
    survey items. Attempt to minimize such factors as noise,
    distractions, heat, and the like.

D. Have ready a larg supply of number 2 pencils. All survey
    respondents must use a number 2 pencil in completing the
    survey. Check with the point of contact at the battalion
    to see that the supplies are ready.

E. Before soldiers are seated, distribute pencils and one
    survey booklet to each seat. Distribute surveys based
    on expected numbers:

    •   All members of the Regular Army will answer a
        survey printed in blue, green or brown. These
        survey booklets should be handed out in an
        alternating fashion such that equal numbers of
        each form are administered at each session.

    •   All members of Army Reserves and Army National
        Guard will answer a survey printed in gray.

    •   (Alternatively, distribution may be done as
        recruits enter the room. The most efficient
        distribution method should be chosen in conjunction
        with the contact person at the station.)

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II.   Administration

Direct recruits to seats, ask for their attention if
necessary, make sure they can hear you, then announce
to soldiers (READ VERBATIM):

My name is _____. I am from the
University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida, and I will
be conducting this survey for the Army Research Institute.
Please turn to the front of the booklet. Make sure you
have the correct survey. The title of the survey indi-
cates if it is for Active Army Recruits or for Army
Reserves and Army National Guard Recruits. Active Army
Recruits should have a booklet printed in blue, green,
or brown; U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard Recruits
should have a booklet printed in gray.

When everyone is ready, direct the recruits to read along with
you on page one of the booklet and read aloud the material from
the front page of the survey booklet. These paragraphs are as
follows (READ VERBATIM):

The Army Research Institute (ARI) is conducting a survey
of people entering the ARMY. You have been selected to
participate in this important survey. Your answers will
have no effect on you as an individual. Please read and
follow all directions carefully.

NOTE

Public Law 93-573, called the Privacy Act of 1974,
requires that you be informed of the purpose and uses
to be made of the information that is collected.

The Department of the Army may collect the information
requested in the ARI Survey of New Army Recruits under
the authority of 10 United States Code 139.

Providing information in this questionnaire is
voluntary. Failure to respond to any particular
questions will not result in any penalty.

The information collected in the survey will be used
to evaluate and improve military personnel and
recruiting policies. This information will be
used for research and analysis purposes only.

HOW TO FILL OUT THIS SURVEY

a. Listen to the directions given before you begin.

b. Read each question carefully.

c. Mark your answers directly on this form.

d. Read carefully and follow the marking directions on page 2.

e. Fill in the circle next to the answer(s) that best fits your opinion. Some questions should only have one answer; others will direct you to mark all that apply.

Ask if there are any questions at this point.

Now ask the respondents to enter their roster number in the box in the lower right hand corner of the first page. [Point to the box on your copy of the booklet to illustrate.]

Direct the recruits to turn to page 2 of the booklets. Direct the recruits to read the first true/false question and raise their hand if the question is NOT TRUE for them. Distribute correct booklets as required.

Now direct the recruits to read the marking directions, which you will read aloud as follows (READ VERBATIM):

MARKING DIRECTIONS

• Use a number 2 pencil only.

• Make heavy black marks that fill the circle.

• If you change your mind, erase completely. Notice the correct way to fill in your answer.

• Some questions require a number as an answer (such as "What is your age?") Write in the answer at the top of the grid, then fill in the corresponding circle in the column below. The answer in the example is 32.

• Ask if there are any questions.

Now review the segment on how to answer the questions. Direct the recruits to read along with you on page 2 of the booklet. [Read from the booklet itself the material on page 2.]

C-3

Add the following (READ VERBATIM):

>Now, please note the following which is not printed on
>your booklet. Your answers to some questions may at
>times require that you go to or skip to another question.
>Please go to the exact question listed next to your
>answer.

Finally, direct recruits to turn to page 3 of the booklet and
say (READ VERBATIM):

>Locate the social security number block on your booklet.
>Print your social security number in the boxes and fill
>in the matching circles in the columns below the digits
>of your social security number. (Pause) Now do this
>same thing to enter your military occupational specialty
>(MOS).

After all are done, ask if there are questions.

Now, read the following final instructions (READ VERBATIM):

>PLEASE work efficiently and carefully on the remaining
>items. We are counting on you to put forth your best
>effort. You will have 60 minutes to complete the
>booklets. Please remain seated until all have finished.
>Begin.

Stay with respondents throughout the administration in order
to answer any questions they may have. Go to the recruits'
seat to answer questions once you have finished the general
instructions. This will prevent others from being disturbed
by questions.

III.   **After Administration**

A.   When time is up or when all have finished, whichever
comes first, ask that all pass their pencils up to the
front of the room. You may then carry a box around to
collect the pencils.

B.   Have all survey booklets passed to the front of the
room. Move to the first row and collect all booklets.

C.   If the contact person suggests a more efficient
collection strategy for that reception battalion,
make arrangements accordingly.

D.   Save for reuse any booklets that have not been marked
or have only roster number and perhaps one or two
questions answered.

E. If your administration is done for that day, you should:

1) Go through each survey booklet to verify roster numbers, social security numbers and MOS numbers. [Assume the roster is correct and correct errors on the booklets accordingly.] Review the responses in each booklet and check for light or incorrect markings. Adjust as necessary.

2) After reviewing each booklet, enter roster number on the last page, and complete the daily log as required. Note special problems, if any, as they occurred during each session.

3) Batch and box completed booklets to get them ready for UPS or parcel post as arranged with your contact person.

4) Complete the header sheet provided and place on top of the completed booklets. One header sheet will be placed in the box for each separate administration clearly indicating which session a particular batch of booklets came from. This may mean doing two or more header sheets for a single administration if the booklets are packed in more than one box. Or, at times there may be several header sheets in one box. Pack problem questionnaires with notes directly behind the header sheet for that administration.

Reporting Requirements

I. Budgetary

    A. Receipts (not credit card receipts)

        1) Required for items of $20 or more

        2) Hotel receipts

        3) Plane tickets

        4) Rental car receipts

    B. Itemization of Expenses

        1) Telephone

        2) Clerical

        3) All other

II. Substantive

    A. Progress Reports and Logs

        1) Administration logs - daily/weekly

            • daily activities/problems/significant events

            • respondent counts

            • questionnaire problems

            • lessons learned

        2) Final summary of significant events

ARI NEW RECRUIT SURVEY 1986

Log of Administration Activities

Reception Battalion _____   Administrator _____   Dates _____

	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Weekly Totals	
	A-C	D	A-C	D	A-C	D	A-C	D	A-C	D	A-C	D
Respondents were in which day of processing (indicate 1, 2 or 3												
1) Number surveyed												
2) Number declining to take survey												
3) Number not surveyed for other reasons (indicate in remarks below the reason)												
Total (add 1, 2 and 3 above												

Remarks (Register here unusual problems, significant events, questionnaire problems and lessons learned):

_____

_____

_____

Your Signature/Initials _____

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